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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/646,872	08/25/2003	Hiroshi Nomura	P23682	1673
7055	7590	09/10/2004	EXAMINER	
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.			SMITH, ARTHUR A	
1950 ROLAND CLARKE PLACE			ART UNIT	
RESTON, VA 20191			PAPER NUMBER	
			2851	

DATE MAILED: 09/10/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/646,872	Applicant(s) NOMURA, HIROSHI	
	Examiner Arthur A Smith	Art Unit 2851	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 August 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 17-29 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4,6 and 14-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2,5 and 7-13 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 August 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/20/04; 5/04/04</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 14-16 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nomura et al. (US 20010024573 A1).

In reference to claims 1 and 14-16, Nomura et al. discloses a supporting structure for a lens barrel, the structure comprising: an annular ring, ref. 11 having an axis and a circumferential engagement surface, ref. 11b, provided circumferentially around said axis; a first ring, ref. 17, having an engagement surface, ref. 17b, circumferentially around said axis, and configured to contact said annular ring engagement surface and further configured to be mounted radially inwardly of said annular ring for rotational movement about said axis relative to the annular ring, paragraph 64; a second ring, ref. 18, supporting at least one optical element, ref. RL, the second ring having an engagement surface provided circumferentially around said axis, and configured to contact the annular ring engagement surface, ref. 18a, and further configured to be mounted radially inwardly of said annular ring for rotational movement about said axis relative to the annular ring, the second ring being capable only of axial movement relative to the first ring; and a biasing arrangement configured to urge the first and second rings in generally opposite directions and bias the first and

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second ring engagement surfaces into contact with the annular ring engagement surface, paragraph 63.

In reference to claims 3 and 4, Nomura et al. discloses wherein the biasing arrangement comprises at least one spring, ref. 21, provided between the first and second rings, see fig. 1.

In reference to claim 6, Nomura et al. discloses wherein the engaging surface of the first ring comprises two or more radially extending projections, ref. 17b, formed at different circumferential positions, fig. 1.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 17-29 allowed.

Claims 2, 5 and 7-13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

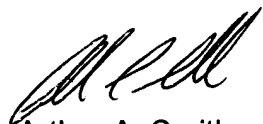
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Arthur A Smith whose telephone number is (571) 272 2129. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays during the same hours.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Judy Nguyen can be reached on (572) 272 2258. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Smith', with a stylized, cursive script.

Arthur A. Smith
September 3, 2004